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## President Akufo-Addo presents credentials to eight new ambassadors

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Accra, June 3, GNA - President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo on Friday presented letters of credence to eight newly-appointed High Commissioners and Ambassadors-designate at the Flagstaff House, Accra.

They were Ms Anna Bossman, an international corporate lawyer, human rights advocate and former Acting Commissioner for the Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (France), Alhaji Rashid Bawa, a public servant, a former legislator and a past ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Nigeria), Paapa Owusu Ankomah, a renowned lawyer, former minister of state and five-term Legislator (United Kingdom), Mrs Gina Ama Blay, an entrepreneur and Media practitioner (Germany) and Dr Barfuor Adjei-Barwuah, a distinguished public servant and former ambassador to Japan (United State of America).

The others were Mr Stephen Mahamadu Dawuni Yakubu, a former member of Parliament (Morocco), Mr Frederick Daniel Laryea, an administrator who has worked with the UN and the African Development Bank and former ambassador to Senegal, Gambia and Cape Verde (Cote d'Ivoire) and Mr Edward Boateng, an entrepreneur and media mogul (China).

They swore the oath of allegiance, secrecy and the official oath.

President Akufo-Addo congratulated them on their well-deserved appointments, and exhorted the envoys to safeguard, protect and promote the high image of Ghana at all times.

He said the envoys were carefully chosen for their assignments because they had distinguished themselves in their various fields of endeavor in the public service of the country, adding 'You are eminently fit to represent Ghana in your respective places of accreditation, which have expressed satisfaction with your appointments.'

The President reminded them that they were the most visible symbol of Ghana's esteemed standing as the beacon of democracy on the continent, saying 'In all your actions you must guard jealously our country's image....I am confident it is a charge you would uphold.'

'You have the onerous responsibility of preserving and promoting the image of Ghana, whose reputation amongst the comity of nations is high. You represent a country that as a result of the commendable conduct of the Ghanaian people is regarded as one of the stable countries on the continent because of a functioning democracy, governed by the rule of law and respect for the liberties and human rights and the principles of democratic accountability.

President Akufo-Addo further reminded them that his election to the high office of the land was as a result of the Ghanaian people being dissatisfied with the direction of the economy, and that they should, in all their dealings remember the promises government made to the people to revamp the economy and improve the standards of living of the citizenry.

'One of our biggest challenge is the economy we inherited... it bears repeating that we inherited an economy confronted with serious economic challenge; 74 percent debt to GDP ratio, fiscal deficit of 9 percent, \$2.5 billion debts overhang in the energy sector, a growth rate of 2.6 percent in 2016, the lowest in the last 23 years, erratic power supply, declining agricultural and industrial growth rate, high lending and inflation rates, widespread unemployment and widespread corruption.

'That is why the people of Ghana voted emphatically for change because of the belief that we could fix it...and fix it we will,' he stated.

He said Government has made it a policy to seek more private sector equity financing for infrastructure projects rather than the historic resort to borrowing that has resulting in the ballooning of the country's debts, exhorting the ambassadors-designate and high commissioners to 'drive private sector investment into Ghana.'

'You are the chief promoters of Ghana's commercial interest to the respective countries of which you are going....promoting Ghana means working closely with the ministries and agencies at home whose role it is to generate investment in the country.

'You should remember the slogans of governments economic development drive, 'one-district-one factory', 'one village-one dam', 'planting for food and jobs', they are descriptions of our commitment to rapid development and transformation of the nation's industrial and agricultural sectors.

'We are determined to create the appropriate macro-economic environment which will attract domestic and foreign investment into sectors of our economy. You have to help in that exercise,' he said.

President Akufo-Addo advised them to develop cordial working relations with the professional Foreign Service officers at their duty post, and draw on their invaluable experience and knowledge to enable them work effectively.

He also asked them to maintain a good rapport with the Ghanaian community to further their prospects of success in their assignments, saying 'They would be counting and looking up to you to champion not only Ghana's interest but theirs as well ...do your best not to disappoint them.'

Dr Adjei- Barwuah, on behalf of his colleagues, thanked the President for investing confidence in them and giving them the opportunity to represent Ghana.

He said they go to their duty post mindful of the support the Ghanaian people have given to the Government and the massive promises made by the Government to the people, assuring the President that they would deliver on their mandate.

GNA

By Ken Sackey, GNA

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